/119 cont./

000 and bilocal groups of families. The group of families -- the
621 multiplicity of relationships permits no other designation --
431 is therefore the next smaller constituent element of the village unit; to be sure, the ceremonial gift-exchange emphasizes the subdivision of the village, in that it underlines the affiliation of the partner to one of the two other groups of families, but, on the other hand, also joins the three groups of families as common inhabitants of the same village.

It might now seem that the group of families, which appears in the gift-exchange as a functional unit, is only a chance conglomeration of nuclear families and thus of minor importance.
621 It comes into operation, however, on another decisive occasion,
166 namely, in connection with /120/ the migratory movements, which I shall sketch for you in a few words. The inhabitants of a
[361] village never remain longer than about three to four weeks in their
[342] main village, that clearing in the virgin forest with relatively permanently built houses; then they leave home for a period at least equally long, but seldom farther away than one to two days of travel, and build themselves in a favorable spot in the forest a row of small, triangular huts which are just large enough to provide room for a nuclear family, i.e., the parents and their unmarried children. The new place is chosen according to the
262 possibilities that it offers for gathering forest fruits and for hunting;
245 nevertheless economic reasons are not actually the cause for this
194 migration, for even during this period they continue to live from
166 the very fruitful banana planting near the main village. About every ten days a group of men go and fetch additional supplies of bananas, which the Waika today use for about 90 per cent
[222] of their diet. To be sure, during this forest period they live on
[224] gathered fruits and by hunting more than they do in the main village, and we shall therefore hardly go wrong in assuming that there are involved in these short-term forest sojourns traditionally preserved reminiscences of the era of pure hunting for wild food on the part of the Waika, undoubtedly still not very far in the past.

/20 cont./
411 and Waiká (89) (90). In the Hamburg Museum für Völkerkunde
114
184

89. Zerries, 1956b, p. 151.

90. Schuster, 1958b, p. 17.

und Vorgeschichte, there are, /21/ moreover, three Xiriána arrows with this point (Koch-Grünberg Collection, 12.25:39-41) and an arrow from the Xamatári (Boeldecke Collection, 56.15:6).

411 4. Ranaká -- Forked wooden point of a bird arrow; length, 12-15
[824] centimeters. The material is furnished by a tree -- paioórimá -- which shows countless such forkings. The lower part of the stem is pointed and is set in the arrow cane wound with Bromelia fibers (Fig. 2e). Thus far there is a parallel for this arrow point only among the Waiká (91a).

91a. Barker, 1953, p. 464.

5. Unamú -- Wooden arrow-point with a coating of poison. A thin, pointed rod of the hard wood of the pupunha palm, 22-24 centimeters long, is coated with arrow poison, giving it a black appearance. The rear end is inserted in the arrow cane wound with
● [824] Bromelia fibers (Fig. 2d). Such poisoned arrows are used exclusively for hunting monkeys, since these animals living in the tall trees are otherwise difficult to kill. According to the statements of Surára and Pakidái informants, they never shoot poisoned arrows at human beings.

411 Other Yanonámi tribes who likewise use poisoned arrows are
184 the Xiriána (91b), Karimé (92), and Waiká (93) (94). Moreover,

91b. Koch-Grünberg, 1923, p. 312.

92. Salathé, 1931/32, p. 301 and Fig. 5a.

93. Zerries, 1956b, p. 151.

94. Schuster, 1958b, p. 17.

/60 cont./

622 159 Since that time Hewemão has been chief and at the same time, like his predecessor, a medicine man who instructs all the male Surára in religion, mythology, magic, curing the sick, and tribal traditions (see pp. 143f.). He also, however, assigns them to occasional communal projects, supervises their activity in the roças (forest clearings), gives instructions for the building of a maloka, and selects the participants for curing the sick and for magic performances. [224] If a large animal was killed, a tapir, for example, he supervised the fair distribution of the meat so that every family obtained its piece. In the case of smaller game, the hunters usually give their chief a choice piece, and the women bring him and his family fruits and berries or brimming calabashes [554] of refreshing palm drinks. He is thus honored in every way. He and his wives too, however, willingly and freely give up some of their hunting or gathering spoils.

[342] In the large, open maloka he and his two wives and children occupy a special hut (see pp. 24 ff.). During migrations of 622 the tribe he determines when they are to rest and to set out again. 484 Moreover, each morning he arranges for regular march-protection, 159 4-5 warriors who form the advance guard and set out two hours 484 before the departure. They have only their bows and arrows with them and reconnoiter in both directions from the Indian path, in order to be on the lookout for enemies. The bulk of the tribe, which travels in single-file formation, always presented the following picture during the time I lived among the Surára: 3-4 484 warriors armed only with bows and arrows. They carry their 482 weapons longitudinally over their heads or over one shoulder. After them came men with my baggage, the younger brothers of the chief, and finally the latter himself. I walked behind him, my servant Mateus followed me, and the boys and girls with little baskets, then the women with their large, cylindrical baskets, which contain all the household goods. Mothers with babies carried them, in addition, in a carrying band on their left hips. On top of the basket there often sat a little dog, a monkey, or a parrot. Then behind the women there marched 4-5 more warriors as a rear guard.

Surára
Pakidái
Shiriana

173 241 177 [829]

/75 cont./ According to their own statements, both tribes regard the Xiriána as their culture-bearers in this case too. The latter, however, likewise merely adopted agriculture from their higher Karaiben neighbors (348).

348. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 307.

224

b) Hunting

The majority of Surára and Pakidái men are excellent hunters and practice their hunting with the large bows and arrows described above (see pp. 36 ff.), which they know how to handle masterfully. In addition, they know the habits of the animals precisely. They discover every trail of a wild animal, no matter how faint, sniff it, and announce the time when it was at this place. Often they then follow it for hours through the almost impenetrable forest; sometimes they are /76/ gone for several days. Moreover, they know how to attract the animals by imitative sounds.

There are two methods of hunting, the individual hunt -- larâ -- (349) and the collective hunt -- norâ -- (350). The latter, however, now takes place only before the great festival in memory of the dead (see pp. 224 ff.), in order to provide sufficient supplies of meat for it. Trained dogs are trusty helpers in hunting (see pp. 185ff.).

[593] [462]

359. In this case, the hunter often takes his wife along (if he has two or more wives, the oldest usually accompanies him), who must carry the slain animal, or pieces of meat from it, into the maloka.

[184]

350. Among the Waikâ, too, there are these two hunting methods, and the names sound very similar there, "lama" and "henioma" (Zerries, 1956b, p. 151).

[231]

Of larger game the wild pig (Pecari tajacu) -- poxe -- is most often killed, and after that the tapir (Tapirus americanus Briss.) -- xâma -- and a deer species (Cervidae sp.) -- hajâ. The

Surára
Pakidái

/76 cont./ The
•224 meat of all the animals mentioned is greatly prized. Smaller
[262] rodents, however, are regarded as decided delicacies: paca (Cuniculus paca L.) -- amutá -- and cutia (Dasyprocta aguti L.) -- tomã --, which usually are killed with dogs or driven into a hole in the ground, as well as the armadillo (Dasypodidae sp.) -- obó. The latter is killed in the following way: When the Indian has discovered an inhabitated armadillo burrow, he examines it to see whether the animal is occupying it. If this is the case, he quickly fetches dry leaves and blocks the entrance. Then he kindles a fire with his fire apparatus, which he always carries on the quiver (see p. 53), sets fire to the leaves, and, with a palm leaf, fans the smoke into the burrow. This forces the animal to come out after a few minutes, whereupon the hunter is able to kill it
[262] with an arrow or beat it to death with a stick (351). With some-

[171]

351. Caspar describes the same method for the Tuparí Indians (Caspar, 1953, p. 96 and Pl. 3).

what less relish these Indians eat the meat of the capybara (Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris Erxl.) and the various monkey species, such as, for example, the howling monkey (Alouatta sp.) -- ihró --, cuxiú-negro (Chiroptes satanas Humb.) -- uixá --, cuatá (Ateles paniscus L.) -- paxó --, and macaco-da-noite (Aotus infulatus) -- makurutamão. A great deal of skill, however, is required for monkey hunting in particular, because these animals leap from limb to limb in the crowns of tall trees and swing from one treetop to another by means of lianas. -- Feline species (352) are shot

352. Spotted jaguar (Felis onca L.) -- ihrá --, black jaguar (Panthera onca L.) -- hukumarí --, puma (Felis concolor) -- uaquearimã --, maracajá (Felis pardalis Neuw.) -- yaó.

Surára
Pakidái

/76 cont./

224 relatively infrequently, for the most part only when they stay in the vicinity of a maloka and thus constitute a danger for human beings. Only the meat of the maracajá (Felis pardalis Neuw.) is eaten. For some hunters, however, pride in killing such animals plays a role, for finishing off a jaguar, especially the black one, gives him greater esteem. -- Snakes, which are very numerous here because of the considerable dampness, are killed with a stick. If a surucucu (Lachesis muta L.) -- perefma -- (Surára word) -- peléma -- (Pakidái word), the largest and most dangerous poisonous snake of South America, is killed, then the joy is especially great. The head is cut off, and every family gets a piece of the snake's body, which is cooked with other meat. It has an agreeable taste and reminded me of eel. The Surára and Pakidái believe, however, that every person who has eaten the meat of a surucucu will never be bitten by any other poisonous snake. The sucuriju (Eunectes murinus) -- uaikonyá -- and the jibóia-vermelha (Epicrates cenchris) -- oatá -- are also eaten with relish. The jararaca (Lachesis sp.) -- karihirimá --, the papaova (Spilotes sp.) -- karimatá --, and the cobra-coral (Elaps corallinus Wied.) -- huamoxíke --, on the other hand, are never eaten. -- Now and then a cayman (Caiman sclerops Schneid.) -- ihuá -- or a lizard -- xaraimá -- are killed with a stick, and sometimes the hunter, but more often his dog, discovers in the forest a jabuti (Testudo tabulata Woelb.) -- totorí --, whose meat is also very tender and tasty; /77/ it does not come up to that of the water turtle, however. Yet, of the numerous species which inhabit the Demini, Aracá, and their tributaries, the Surára and Pakidái catch only the perema -- talmã --, and, to be sure, they seize it in shallow water with their hands.

Bird hunting requires special training. That is why even boys are encouraged to kill as many small birds as possible, so that later on they will be good hunters.

The following birds are most frequently hunted, on account of both their meat and their feathers: mutum (Crax sp.) -- paruri --, urumutum (Crax sp.) -- katará --, mutum cavalo (Mitu mitu L.) -- katauri --, jacamim (Psophia crepitans L.) -- nhapín --, cujubim

Surára
Pakidái

/77 cont./

223 (Pipile pipile cajubi Pelz.) -- maraxí --, jacu (Penelope sp.) -- kuremá --, japim (Cacicus cela L.) -- anhakoramá --, inambu (Crypturellus sp.) -- rororôme --, inambu-relógio (Crypturellus strigulosus Temm.) -- honamá --, toucan (Rhamphastus sp.) -- mahebé --, arara vermelha (Ara macao L.) arakaké -- arara amarela (Ara ararauna L.) -- maracanã --, papagaio moleiro (Amazona sp.) -- xeraxeramakó --, papagaio curica (Amazona sp.) -- xeraxerá --, garça branca (Casmerodius albus egretta Gm) -- korihená.

[825] [753] The gavião-real (Thrasaetus harpyia L.) -- nonexí -- is killed for magical reasons, because it is believed that there is concealed in it a hostile medicine man who brings sickness and [237] other disasters. Its down feathers are glued into the hair by the men as trophies (see p. 95); the meat is discarded. The gavião-caipira (Hypomorphnus urubitinga urubitinga Gm) -- nonexipéke -- is also killed only for its feathers, which serve the men as upper-arm ornaments.

[825] They never shoot at the urubus (Cathartes foetens, Cathartes aura, etc.) -- uatubá --, for they are glad that they remove the refuse.

●224 In conclusion it should be mentioned that traps are unknown to the Surára and Pakidái (353).

353. There is a corresponding statement by Zerries about the Waiká (Zerries, 1956b, p. 151).

[622] If the hunter has killed a small animal, he may keep this booty for himself and his family, but he often gives the chief a roasted or boiled piece of it. A big-game animal, on the other hand, is divided up under the chief's supervision, and each family gets a piece of meat. This communal feeling is very strongly marked, and no member of the tribe would ever violate it.

/110 cont./

527 Between the patapáanomão festivals the Surára and Pakidái have only a few other festivities in the course of the year. These are but small celebrations, which, for example, take place after the two-months' training of two young men as medicine-man helpers, after a successful war-expedition, upon moving into a newly erected maloka, and in connection with the second menstruation of a girl. The latter has more of an intimate character, for only families of relatives and friends take part in it.

4. Magic for Sickness, Hunting, Love, and Rain

754
825 a) Magic for sickness:

[824] A magic powder is occasionally prepared from the bark ashes of a wild mimosa species (Mimosa acacioides?) -- hekuráhihená -- (see also p. 192) and the bone powder of the gavião-real (Thrasaetus harpyia L.). In the evening, shortly before twilight sets in, if a gavião-real happens to be flying by or is sitting on a tree, the chief blows this powder in the direction of the bird. The latter receives it and with it transmits sickness to a specific hostile tribe.

● 224
789 b) Hunting magic:

[782] The evening before a proposed hunting expedition the hunter takes snuff-powder and prays for about 2-3 hours to the hekurá (see pp. 200/201), whereby through them he requests

[302] Poré and Perimbó (see p. 197) for a successful outcome. Then, before he sets out the next morning, he paints serpentine lines

[825] on his face and body with urucú. If his wife accompanies him, she also applies this design, and the snout and feet of a dog that is taken along are painted with the same color. This is

[751] supposed to increase the luck of the hunt and is at the same time bound up with defensive magic against possible dangers threatened by poisonous snakes and jaguars.

Surára
Pakidái

/110 cont./

224 If the hunter accompanied by his wife has slain small game or a bird, the wife carries the hunting booty into the community /111/ house. If the man was alone, he brings the animal only to the entrance of his dwelling. It is taken inside by his wife or by another man. The same is true for big game, for example, a tapir, from which a few pieces of meat are first taken along; the rest is fetched later by friendly fellow tribesmen. Thus, the hunter may always carry his booty to the entrance of the maloka, but he may never go inside with it. He must also leave the evisceration of the animal to other men. Subsequently he may roast the meat, to be sure, but after it has been prepared, he is forbidden to eat the first morsel. When (982) he has finished his meal, he is obliged to pray anew by way of the hekurá to Poré and Perimbó, for the latter demand that one thank them for the hunting booty. If the hunter observes all these rules, the united Supreme Being and the hekurá will always be well-disposed toward him and will always provide for a successful outcome of the hunt.

224 Among many other tribes of South America there are the
191 same or similar conceptions of hunting magic. I can here refer
114 to Zerries, who has gathered together the pertinent source material and made a comparative study of it (537) (538). This

537. Zerries, 1951.

538. Zerries, 1954a.

shows that urucú is almost always used for the red coloring before the hunt. Métraux, however, mentions that the ancient Mocovi in the Gran Chaco smeared the snouts of their dogs with jaguar blood (539). From this Zerries draws the justifiable

539. Métraux, 1944, p. 283.

conclusion that urucú is a substitute for blood (540), which

540. Zerries, 1954a, p. 22.

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191
114

/111 cont./
Métraux also documents for the Chiriguano (541).

541. Métraux, 1931, p. 154, footnote 1.

It should also be pointed out that the hunting rule so strictly observed by the Surára and Pakidái men, which says that a hunter may never carry his game into the maloka himself, can probably be traced back to Karaiben /Carib/ influences. In this connection Zerries speaks of propitiatory rites relating to the killed animal (542). According to his investigations, the

542. Zerries, 1954a, p. 359.

northern region of South America emerges as the nuclear area, where they are found primarily among Karaiben tribes of the Venezuelan coast and its hinterland (543). The author cites

543. Zerries, 1954a, pp. 136/37, 359/60.

Roth (544) and Crévaux (545) as the most important sources, as

544. Roth, 1915, p. 294.

545. Crévaux, 1883, p. 283.

well as the very old report by Rochefort (546), which shows that

546. Rochefort, 1658, p. 451.

even the Island Karaiben were acquainted with this custom.

832
[824]

c) Love magic:

For the purpose of love magic, young men sometimes wear a curauá-fiber string around the neck, to which is fastened a small piece of the root of the tajá (Colocasia antiquorum and Xanthosoma violaceum Schott) -- hamë -- (see p. 83). If the

/203 cont./

291 Fig. 11) for the Surará and Pakidai (cf. Koch-Grünberg, 1923,
301 Pl. 45). As adornment the girls sometimes wear cords on their
237 arms and legs or bands across their chests. White and multi-
colored feathers are frequently tied to these cords or bands by the
531 women as much as by the men. The women paint various
302 geometric figures on their bodies, and we observed a typical de-
[386] sign in zigzag form which the women wore on their cheeks. The pigment was red (made from onoto) or blue, made from a fruit which the Sanemá call taarimóg, with which the women paint one another's cheeks. The design is the same as the one which they on occasion paint on the stones which surround the camp and which was identified with the path of the sun and of the moon. They say that the sun is happy /204/ to see these designs. A very similar design which we saw on the face of a woman was interpreted for us as "path of the moon." We were not able to verify with any certainty whether some relationship between menstruation and this design exists for them.

721 Before entering upon belligerent relations with an enemy,
302 the warriors paint their bodies with onoto. They believe that
[789] this practice assures good aim and protects them from the arrows
[624] of the enemy. As we have mentioned before, in time of war the Sanemá take orders from a war chief who is different from the one who is in command in time of peace.

727 A warrior who kills an enemy returns very slowly to his
774 home, because the "dead person weighs heavily on his chest." They believe that the hĩkula of the dead person is inside the chest of the victor. In there he tries to persuade the man to
[785] "eat a lot." But the warrior resists this and fasts for several weeks, for otherwise the hĩkula of the dead person would kill him too. After this time has passed the hĩkula of the enemy goes out to his
725 fate. It would seem that the most effective war tactic is to surprise the enemy at dawn when he is asleep. We did not see Sanemá rancherias fortified with palisades, as we did in other Yanoama subtribes.

● 224 The Sanemá, like the Yanoama in general, are excellent hunters, and many traits of their culture indicate a deep tradition in this lore.

/204 cont./

226 They also fish, but fishing takes second place and is much less important than hunting.

222 241 Other important sources of food are wild fruits and vegetables, which they frequently obtain. Many local groups devote themselves to agriculture, which they carry on in rudimentary fashion and which they adopt from their Caribe neighbors, but for many groups the products of the earth constitute at present a primary food base.

• 224 The men prefer to go out hunting at dawn or in the afternoon before the sun sets. During the morning they spy on the game as it comes to drink water or to look for food in the places [223] known by the hunter. In the afternoon the Sanemá hunts birds when they return to the trees to spend the night hidden among the leaves.

The men commonly go out alone, sometimes with a com- [789] panion, or in small parties. They walk with great care, without [826] making any noise, and they believe that in a moment of great danger they can develop such power in their necks that it lifts them above the ground and they fly to the height of the trees.

224 /205/ The hunters prepare themselves in various ways for 777 their work. If one of them has had bad luck, he tries to rid 826 himself of the "dark blood," the cause of his poor aim. He [237] achieves this by piercing, by means of a ray-fish sting, the muscles of the arm or by making small incisions on the forearm. [841] "Dark blood" is produced in the body of a man when a woman during menstruation touches the hunter or one of his weapons, or also when a woman in this condition has eaten any of the game hunted by him.

224 A good hunter does not eat any of his own catch in order not 262 to lose good luck or to miss when he shoots. He eats the game [777] of his companion; of the animals caught by him he only asks for the skull and the ribs, which he carefully keeps in certain places near the rancheria or in his house. They are exhibited [554] there in order to augment his prestige as a skillful hunter, on which depend many aspects of his social life, such as, for example, obtaining a second wife.

/205 cont./

224 411 It is also dangerous to lose an arrow when one is hunting. That is why they only shoot the arrow when, should they miss the target, they can easily retrieve it. In spite of these precautions, the arrow is sometimes lost or remains hanging from an [782] inaccessible tree. Then the man, in order not to lose his aim, puts it under the protection of Omao, to whom he speaks, saying: "Omáuawan ipa ʃflaka toldíapala!" which means: "Omao, watch over my arrow!"

224 777 789 826 To lose one's aim or luck in hunting may arise from a technical reason or a supernatural cause. The former is due to a weakening of the body brought about by sickness or other causes which influence sight or the strength of the arm. If it is due to this latter cause, the hunter knows the remedy. He goes to the forest and searches for a tree with hard, heavy wood; he cuts a piece and sets fire to it and collects the ashes, which he applies to the cuts inflicted on his arm. If he bears the pain without touching the hurt arm with the other hand and does not shout, his muscles will once again recover their lost strength and the hunter will recover his luck and good aim.

224 776 777 If the hunter returns without any game, it may be because Omao did not favor him, and this is the supernatural cause of his failure.

224 782 [777] According to our informants from the Erebato, a good hunter speaks frequently with Omao, for without his protection he will not be lucky. For this reason he says to him: "Omao awayí ipa ʃálawa hadu kapálama!" which is translated as: "Omao, draw my game out into the open!"

Worse than being unlucky is to lose one's life in a hunting accident, and in order to implore the protection of the other world, the hunter prays, "Omao sátoria palái!" that is to say: "Omao, protect me!"

224 825 /206/ Of course, all these precautions are useless if the hunter has not learned the art of hunting. He must know how the various animals live and how to identify their tracks. If these latter should be fresh, he orders his dog to follow the track of the game; the success of a Sanemá hunter depends in great

/206 cont./

224 825 part on his dog. The hunter must also know a great variety of calls for attracting the animals and birds and, above all, know which arrow to shoot in order to kill the animal which may come in answer to his call.

224 775 All this and a great deal more about which we are ignorant must be learned by the Sanemá hunter in order to have the benefit of his knowledge not only on earth but also in the world of Omao after his death. An expert hunter continues to be one in "heaven" and there he will have the opportunity of recompensing Omao for the benevolence showed him during his earthly life.

224 The Sanemá hunt with bow and arrows. Usually each man carries with him, in addition to his bow, five arrows and a quiver with various types of points.

[415 372] The quiver, made of bamboo, is carried, hanging by means of a bejuco, from the neck, on the chest, or across the back. In most cases they carry, tied to the same quiver, some small sticks with which to kindle fire. In the forest they pull out with extraordinary speed the point best suited to kill the animal which comes within range, and it is surprising with what dexterity and speed they can shoot one or several arrows.

If there are several hunters surrounding a pack of peccaries or a group of monkeys, the booty belongs to the one who kills it.

It seems that the Sanemá of the Erebato also use a kind of trap (Schwippgalgenfalle), particularly to capture the lapa /paca/ or deer (20).

20. It would seem that this trap reflects a cultural borrowing among the Sanemá, since the Surará, Pakidai (Becher, 1960, p. 77), and Waica (Zerries, 1956c, p. 151) do not have it.

223 In order to catch birds, the hunter climbs up into a very high tree and hides there behind some thick branches. He attracts the birds with whistles, and, when they are near, he shoots them; a companion waits at the foot of the tree for the prey's fall, in

/206 cont./

223 order to pick it up. As a result of his expertness in hunting, he knows the trees in which the birds gather to spend the night. The man, using palm leaves and bejucos, carefully prepares a blind with the sure hope that, by means of this ambush, the booty will be plentiful.

224 262 [237] [482] Hunting in groups is common among the Sanemá, and they do this particularly to surround a group of monkeys, peccaries, or in order to kill a feline. /207/ They do not eat the meat of jaguars, but keep the canine teeth in the roof of the house. They tie up the peccaries that they get, front feet to the back ones, load them on their backs, and carry them home. The meat of the peccary is greatly esteemed, and the whole rancheria gathers to eat the animal, with the exception of the young unmarried men, who, by order of the capitan, must not taste the meat so that the hunters who have killed the animals will not die. They may, however, eat other kinds of meat and the food which they most like.

There are some animals that the Sanemá are prohibited from hunting: thus, they do not eat snakes, they kill the cayman, but [.766] do not sample its flesh. The Sanemá of the Erebato told us that they cremate caymans as they do men, for, in fact, as far as [784] they are concerned, caymans were previously men. It is taboo to kill a morrocoy or a turtle. They were people before and Omao 262 does not permit them to be killed. There are other animals which 223 they kill and eat only under certain conditions, among them the eagle (21).

> 21. The Surará and Pakidai kill the eagle, but throw away its flesh. They say that it transmits sickness (Becher, 1960, p. 77). (Cf. the section on "death" in the present study /see pp. 93-94 /.)

223 825 262 If a hunter comes upon an eagle, he believes that he is facing a speciman of a species of animal which was previously a person. He may be facing a friend or an enemy. Therefore, before shooting, he asks the animal if it is a friend or an enemy, and only if

/236 cont./
539 places (26).

[224
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784]

26. Taking into account what has already been pointed out as a prayer directed to Omao in order that he allow to come out those animals which he would judge as surplus in the animal kingdom, the young man's behavior can be judged as an offense against God because he would not yield to his will.

The father of the young hunter was at home sitting in front of the fire. He was a sablí. Suddenly he saw a swarm of butterflies approaching to put out the fire. A great cloud of smoke arose. The sablí heard the prolonged and penetrating howls of the Great Fox who has various members of his family living in the river. When they come out of the waters, they do not only kill the hunter who made them leave their "house," but all of his family as well. The butterflies also live in the river and are the friends of the Great Fox, whom they help to kill bad and guilty hunters. After putting out the fire they attack the family of the bad hunter, and, if the latter happens to be at home, they suck out his blood from the corners of his eyes. The sablí knew all about this and the grave danger which his son and his whole family were in, but he also knew a means of defending them against the butterflies. He caught some of them and spat on them. The butterflies immediately ceased their attack on him and died. The Great Fox kept quiet because he knew that his victim was in the forest under the protection of a powerful shaman. In this way the young hunter was saved from the teeth of the Great Fox,[1] who devours his victims and swallows them without chewing.

KASMAI

Kasmái is a man who lives in the river. Every six months, when there is a new moon, he comes out of the water to live for three days among men. This pleases them, and they regale him with a dance celebration. Kasmái enjoys himself very much at these celebrations. He comes up out of the river with his body

/441 cont./

Obtaining Food

224 Hunting.

Hunting is done with bows and arrows.

A broad arrow-point of bamboo is used against larger land game, such as the danta, the váquiros /peccaries/, and the large [411] rodents. Poisoned points are used against monkeys and occasionally against dantas. Bone points are used principally to hunt birds. Small birds are hunted with arrows with a blunt point or forked point.

[231] Dogs are used in hunting, and in the case of the smallest wild pigs, these dogs frequently do more killing than the hunters.

The hunters hunt together and surround the game. The one who succeeds in killing it is the owner of the animal. He might make a gift of a few pieces to those who have helped him, but in general he carries the entire animal to his house, where it is cooked. A danta, of course, must be divided up on the spot in order to be transported.

262 Almost all the mammals are eaten, felines being the principal exception. A few snakes are eaten; others are not. The babilla /an amphidious reptile/ is also eaten. Birds of prey, such as hawks, eagles, vultures, and turkey buzzards and others, are not eaten. Almost all the other birds are eaten, even the little humming birds.

/442/ Meat is considered an essential part of the diet and perhaps occupies the second place of importance after platanos.

226 Fishing.

Several types of toxins are used to poison fish in the small currents of water. One of these is a bejuco. Another is the shell of an edible nut with a prickly husk. Another is the bark of a certain tree of great size.

226 462 857 When the waters lower in streams and swamps (generally around the months of January and February), women and children go out armed with clubs and come back with baskets full of fish.

/467 cont./

Division of Labor

462 The men clear the "conucos," plant them, and weed them.
[241] The women carry most of the harvests to their /468/ houses in
[482] their carrying baskets. The men sometimes help carry the harvests when there is more than the women can carry, or when the men go to the "conuco" alone.

[224] The men do the hunting and carry the game back to the house. They may call upon the women to help them when the game has been brought into the vicinity.

[226] The men fish with bow and arrow, hooks, and poison. The women fish with macanas and with baskets.

[499] The men build the bridges.

[342] The men build the structure or framework of the houses and help build the roofs. The women collect the leaves for covering the roof and help to roof.

[313] The women cut most of the firewood and carry it to the
[482] settlement. They cut it on the site and carry it to their houses in the carrying baskets, ready to be used. The men carry to the house the sticks for roasting meat, and, if they need to be cut into pieces, they do it once they have arrived.

[252] The women in general cook breakfast for the entire family. For the other meals, each person generally cooks his own platanos. The women bake the "casabe" /cassava bread/. The men cook everything which has to be boiled in the clay pots, such as the meat of the game which they have taken and the fruit of the "pijiguao" palm.

[482] When the settlement moves, the women carry almost all the belongings of the family and as much food as possible in their carrying baskets, which they hang from their heads by straps or bands. The men carry their bows, the clay pots, and any food that the women cannot carry. The men use straps or bands hanging from their shoulders or their heads, but not baskets.

222 in particular seasons; the most important are manaca, seje, moriche and yagua. The hearts as well as the fruits are eaten, and the Indians usually return to trees they have felled to collect the large, fat, white grubs that mature in the decayed pith. In general, a great deal of energy goes into the collection of these palm fruits in proportion to the caloric return and, even during the peak of the wild fruit harvest, the Yąnomamö still depend heavily on their cultivated foods.

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• 224 Two kinds of hunting techniques provide the Yąnomamö with most of their meat; the occasional kills made by their dogs provide the rest. The first, called rama, is the desultory individual hunting that goes on around the villages. These hunts rarely last more than one day. The second kind of hunting, called heniyomou, involves as many as a dozen hunters who set up a temporary camp a day's walk or more away from the village and use it as the base of operations. This kind of hunting may last five days or more and occurs immediately before a feast, as the etiquette of feasting requires that guests be given fresh meat to eat on their way home after the feast.

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Game animals most commonly taken include several species of monkeys, two species of wild pig, tapir, armadillo, agouti, anteaters, wild turkeys, and a small alligator-like reptile (babilla, Spanish). Other game animals taken with less enthusiasm and less frequency include deer, turtles, parrots, snakes, capibara, guinea-hens and a large rodent (lapa, Spanish).

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fishing and collecting forest fruits. (1923: 299-300. My translation. See also 1922:226.)

His assertion that the Yąnomamö lived only on hunting, fishing, and collecting wild forest fruit was unsupported not only by the existing accounts but also by his own observations; and it has never been verified by any field worker who has spent more than a few days with the Yąnomamö.[1] Nor was the conclusion warranted that the Yąnomamö had no fixed habitation sites; Koch-Grünberg was visited by one of the groups and the other had a garden site a short distance from where he met them. Finally, the antiquity of the group as a "population layer" is something that can only be speculated about at best; indeed, the concept 'population layer' is itself an analytic construct presupposing a considerable amount of knowledge concerning tribal distributions over a period of time which, at least for this area, is entirely lacking.

The expedition of the Frobenius Institute in 1954-55 conducted the first anthropological inquiry in this area that concentrated exclusively on the study of the Yąnomamö. The members of the expedition, Otto Zerries and his assistant, Meinhard Schuster, spent 10 months in the village of Mahekodotedi. They selected the Yąnomamö because of their interest in hunters and gatherers; the literature, especially the work of Koch-Grünberg, described the Yąnomamö as such. They

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[1] "It is surprising to notice, that the Waica, formerly reported as a hunting and gathering tribe by visitors who had only superficial contact with them, are actually horticulturists." (Zerries, 1955:78.)

114 initiated their work among this group, in Zerries' words, ". . . to come a step closer to the problem of the world's oldest cultural layer of the hunter and collector."[1] On arriving at Mahekodo-tedi, however, Zerries was surprised to discover that the Yąnomamö were not in fact hunters and gatherers, but horticulturists:

> To our great surprise we were obliged to conclude right from the start of our investigations that the Waika are above all dependent on the cultivation of the plantain (platano) to a considerable degree. (1958:177. My translation.)

114 174 224 222 241 Although Zerries acknowledges the current horticultural status of the Yąnomamö, his work is frequently characterized by attempts to portray the Yąnomamö as hunting and gathering people who have only recently adopted cultivation and are still in transition from a pure hunting and gathering stage to a purely horticultural one. Thus, Zerries argues that the Yąnomamö divide their year into seasons fixed by the ripening of individual species of wild fruits (which I have not been able to verify), implies that peach palm (pijiguao) was recently a collected rather than a cultivated fruit, describes the Yąnomamö settlement pattern and annual cycle as half-nomadic or semi-nomadic, and generally emphasizes the role of hunting and collecting in determining the cultural status of the Yąnomamö in South American culture history, all of which detract, I believe, from an understanding of their culture as it exists at the present time and probably has

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[1] 1964:1. My translation.

existed for the past several hundred years. At many points the data used by Zerries to infer that they were until recently hunters and gatherers lend themselves to other interpretations:

> Finally, the Waika connect the general word for food, "ni," with the word for archery, "niai," out of which results that in their conceptual world, subsistence itself in the last analysis results from hunting--which is symptomatic of the way of life of the hunting and gathering heritage of the Waika. (1958:180. My translation.)

The word nii (not ni) usually refers to vegetable food, most of which is cultivated by the Yąnomamö and generally does not include meat. The word for the latter, yąro, conversely, does not apply to vegetable food. Again, there are two words to describe hunger; ohi refers to that kind of hunger that can be satisfied by eating vegetable food, whereas naiiki is a kind of hunger that can only be satisfied by eating meat or fish. And, it is possible for individuals not to be ohi but be naiiki. One could easily argue that subsistence and cultivation are intimately linked, as their word for one form of hunger (ohi) is similar to their word for taro: ohina. The similarity, then, between the word for archery (niaö) and vegetable food (nii, not ni) tells us nothing about the cultural status of the Yąnomamö either in the past or at the present.

In general, Zerries' data are excellent and his conclusions sound; and his major work (1964) will remain the basic ethnographic source on the Yąnomamö for many years.

The Frobenius Expedition was followed by the work of

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black, heavy, and very brittle. It breaks easily, but the pieces are used by the men as grinding surfaces for their drug manufacture, or as baking dishes when the women make cassava bread. As we shall see below, only a few villages make the clay pots and trade them to the members of other groups.

The most distinctive feature of Yąnomamö technology is that it is very direct.[4] No tool or technique is complicated enough to require specialized labor or raw materials. Each village, therefore, can produce every item of material culture it requires from the jungle resources immediately around it. That is, the simplicity of the tools, the processes of manufacture, and the distribution of resources are such that each village can exist independently of its neighbors as far as technological requirements are concerned. Nevertheless, some specialization in trade and manufacturing does occur, but it seems to be more closely related to the development of political alliances and is therefore discussed in a later chapter. I will describe the material culture at this point and relate it to the over-all adaptation later in this and following chapters.

WEAPONS Wood for bows is obtained from two species of palm tree, one that grows wild and one that is cultivated.[5] The bow is very heavy because palm wood is extremely dense. One cannot, for example, drive a nail into palm wood. The fibers that go into the thick bowstring come from the inner bark of a tree; these are twisted into a cord by rolling them with the palm of the hand against the thigh. The cord is so strong when it is new that it can be used as a hammock rope, but it deteriorates with age and must be replaced periodically. The bow itself is shaped with the lower jaw of a large, wild pig. The canine teeth in the pig's lower mandible are worn to razor-sharp edges by chewing and make magnificent cutting tools; the bow stave is held vertically and the mandible is planed up and down the surface, each upward stroke shaving off a fine layer of wood. After much labor and patience, the bow is completed. It has a circular or oval cross section and is very difficult to draw. Most Yąnomamö bows would compare favorably to our best hunting bows in strength.

Palm wood is also used for one type of arrow point. A splinter of palm wood about 15 inches long is smoothed down to a fine point, and several lateral grooves are cut into it along its length. This is done so that the point will break off in the body of the target. This type of point is covered with curare poison, which slowly dissolves in the animal (or man) after the point has broken off. This point is used most frequently for monkey hunting, as monkeys tend to grab hold of branches and tree trunks when they are wounded. The curare relaxes their muscles, and the monkeys sooner or later fall to the ground. Unless the point were coated with curare, the animal might die high in the treetops and could not be easily recovered. The Yąnomamö also carry large supplies of extra palm points in their bamboo quivers since these points break whether or not the arrow strikes the intended target. This type of point is manufactured in large quantities in several villages and is traded to other groups.

The curare vine is also collected wild from the jungle. It is soaked in hot water to leach out the active ingredient. The water containing the poison is then painted onto the palm-wood points over glowing coals; the water evaporates, leaving a brown, sticky

[4]For more details on Yąnomamö material culture than are given here, see Becher (1960) and Zerries (1964).

[5]The cultivated palm, *pijiguao*, produces a desirable fruit. It is cultivated for the fruit, but the wood of dead palms is used in bow manufacturing.

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4 feet off the ground at the rear and 6 feet off the ground at the front. Shorter sticks are then laid crossways on the major roof poles and these, in turn, covered with several layers of long, broad, wild "banana" leaves (see Glossary, under "Banana, wild"). It is quite small, but can sleep three individuals. Frequently, the traveler finds the remains of one of these houses and has merely to put a new layer of leaves on the roof to make it waterproof; occasionally, he takes a chance that it won't rain that night and does not improve the hut at all.

When the Yąnomamö settle a new area, they erect temporary villages of these crude huts and live in them until they can build a *shabono*. They also live in huts like these while they are re-roofing the old *shabono*.

The permanent village is complete when the palisade of logs is erected around its circumference. This is placed some 3 or 4 feet behind the roof, allowing space for a path around the village inside the palisade. The palisade itself is about 10 feet high and usually made of a mixture of palm and hardwood logs. It is kept in repair only when there is some reason to suspect raiders. Otherwise, people pilfer logs from it for use as firewood. The entrance to the village, as well as the palisade entrance, is covered with brush and logs at night to keep out intruders. Anyone trying to enter will inevitably make the brush move and alarm the village dogs.

FOOD AND ITS GATHERING The jungle provides numerous varieties of food, both animal and vegetable. The most commonly taken game includes several species of monkeys, two varieties of wild "turkey," two species of wild pig, armadillos, anteaters, tapir, deer, a small alligator, small rodents, and several species of smaller birds. Wild vegetable foods commonly exploited by the Yąnomamö are: palm fruits of several species, hardwood fruits, brazil nuts, tubers, and the seed pods of the feral banana. Of these, the palm fruits are by far the most significant.

These occur seasonally and, for brief periods of time, produce large quantities of fruits. Unfortunately, there is very little edible substance in each fruit, so that in order to get filled, one must eat the edible portion of enormous quantities of fruit. The Yąnomamö extensively exploit two closely related palms, *pei* and *karashi*. The *pei* fruits are about the size of small hen's eggs and occur in large clusters, weighing 80 pounds and more, near the tops of the palm trees. The *karashi* fruits are about half that size. The exterior portion of the fruit is a leathery shell which is peeled with the teeth. Inside there is a thin layer of very bitter, white flesh. This is chewed and sucked off. The taste resembles that of a poor grade of bath soap. Of the two, I found *karashi* the more repugnant. My throat burned when I ate them.

Another commonly exploited palm is the *ediwashi*. It is tangerine red in color and covered with a leather-like skin that consists of hundreds of small scales. They are about the size of large hen's eggs and resemble small hand grenades. When the fruit is dry, as, for example, when it is first cut from the tree, it is almost impossible to get the leathery scales off. The Yąnomamö overcome this difficulty by throwing the fruit bunches into water and letting them soak for several days, after which the scales can be easily scraped off with the fingernails, exposing a thin layer of yellowish, soft flesh that tastes very much like cheese. The fruits begin to ferment after they have soaked, producing a slightly pungent taste. I enjoyed eating *ediwashi* with the Yąnomamö; the fruit was good, and the technique of eating it was very sociable. We would wade into the swamp where the fruit had been submerged and grope around in the murky water to locate it. After

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They have much less fat on them than grubs, and become dry and crunchy during the cooking, having a texture and form like cheese pone when prepared.

Large spiders are also collected; they are simply placed directly on the hot coals and roasted alive. The legs and thorax are eaten.

Another common insect food is the larvae of a species of large ant. Only the head of the squirming larvae is eaten. It is very crunchy and has a nutty taste, but one must exercise caution in eating them since they are equipped with sharp pincers and can inflict a painful wound on the tongue or lip.

The game animals are all shot with arrows. The curare palm points are usually used for monkey hunting, while the lanceolate bamboo points are used for large game, such as deer, tapir, and wild pigs. A third kind of point is used for birds. It consists of a long, slender stick to the end of which has been bound a splinter of gently curved monkey bone. This serves as the penetrating point and the barb; it is difficult to extract the point once the barb enters the animal.

The Yąnomamö also fashion a fourth kind of arrow point as they need it. It is simply a stick that has numerous twigs branching in a close cluster. The twigs are cut off an inch or so from the main branch, and the stem is inserted into the end of the arrow shaft that usually contains the curare-tipped point. This fourth type of point is used to kill small birds whose feathers are desired for decoration purposes. On one occasion I saw a young man fashion one of these points in a few seconds. He saw a small bird, located a shrub a few feet away, bit off a branch with his teeth, bit the twigs off, and stuck the point into his arrow shaft—without taking his eyes off the small bird for a second. This type of point is discarded after it serves its temporary purpose.

The Yąnomamö do not employ traps or compounds when hunting. They frequently use dogs to run tapir, pigs, and deer, but most hunting is merely the individual stalking and shooting whatever game is available. As men always carry their weapons with them when they leave the village, they are, in effect, hunting continuously. A communal type of hunting trip invariably precedes a feast; this is described in Chapter 4.

The technique for capturing armadillos is very interesting. Armadillos live in burrows deep underground, and the Yąnomamö are always investigating the entrances of these burrows to see if any signs of recent occupation can be found. If the burrow is occupied, the hunters quickly cover the entrance with combustible materials and start a fire. After the fire is blazing strongly, they find a dried termite nest, which produces large quantities of smoke, and put it onto the fire. When this is ignited, they fan the smoke into the burrow, cover the fire with sand, and look for other openings to the armadillo den. These are quickly spotted when smoke begins to emerge from them and covered with sand to keep the smoke in. Then the men crawl around with their ears held to the ground. The armadillo will sometimes start burrowing in order to escape the smoke; when he does, he is heard and his location immediately established. A stick is used to dig into the ground and find the animal, usually 2 or 3 feet below the surface. On one occasion the men had difficulty locating the animal and dug several holes without hitting the burrow. One of them then uncovered the entrance, obtained a thick vine from a nearby tree, and tied a knot in the end of it. He then introduced the knot into the burrow by spinning the vine rapidly between his hands, pushing it in gently as it twirled. When he could not get the vine to go any further, the men listened on the ground to locate the spinning knot. When they found it, they marked the spot. The vine was

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removed and laid along the ground in the direction of the burrow to measure the distance from the entrance. The men began digging at the end of the vine and located the asphyxiated armadillo on the first attempt.

The jungle provides many other kinds of foods and products too numerous to mention. Some, like vines and lianas, are very useful and commonly employed in basket-making; others, such as edible mushrooms, crabs, pigments, and decorative plant products, are less significant, and exploited only sporadically. Despite the amazing variety of food products to be found in the jungle, however, the Yąnomamö could not exist for any substantial period of time on collected foods only: they rely heavily on their cultivated crops. The tropical forest is much less productive and reliable than one would imagine. The most abundant foods, palm fruits, are seasonal—a group of people could only rely on them for a few months of the year, during which time some 80 group members would have to forage over a wide area to obtain sufficient palm fruits to keep everybody well fed.

Game animals are not abundant, and an area is rapidly hunted out, so that a group must keep constantly on the move. Furthermore, hunting depends as much on luck as it does on skill and is not a very reliable way to supply nourishment. I have gone on five-day hunting trips with the Yąnomamö in areas that had not been hunted for decades, and had we not brought cultivated foods along, we would have been extremely hungry at the end of this time—we did not collect even enough meat to feed ourselves. On other trips, we often managed to collect enough game in one day to feed the entire village.

GARDENING Although the Yąnomamö spend almost as much time hunting as they do gardening, the bulk of their diet comes from foods that are cultivated. Perhaps 85 percent or more of the diet consists of domesticated rather than wild foods—plantains are by far the most important food in the diet.

The Yąnomamö are constantly looking for potential garden sites. When I hunted with them, the topic of conversation that evening would eventually drift over to the merits of the area as a possible site for a new garden. Most new garden sites are, in fact, discovered by hunters.

The land for a new site should not be heavily covered with brush, which is difficult to remove. The larger trees should not be too numerous either, as it takes a good deal of work to chop them down. Ideally, the new site should have very light jungle cover, should be well drained, near a source of drinking water, and relatively free of thorny underbrush. The Yąnomamö call a garden *hikari täka;* jungle that has the potential of being a good garden is likewise called *hikari täka.*

The first operation in making a new garden is to cut the smaller trees and brush; the bigger trees, *kayaba hi,* are left standing until the underbrush is removed. Then the big trees are felled with axes and left lying on the ground to dry out in the sun.

My older informants claimed that they did not have steel tools when they were younger and had to kill the big trees by cutting a ring of bark off around the base of the stump, using a crude stone axe, piling brush around them, and burning them. The trees rarely fell, but the fire usually killed them, and their leaves dropped off, permitting the sunlight to reach the ground.

They also claimed that making a garden was more arduous in those days because a large area would have to be searched for the necessary quantities of kindling used to kill the big trees. Today, however, steel tools are quite common, being provided by the

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men built his own section of the village, but in such a way that the roofs coincided and could be attached by simply extending the thatching. When completed, the village looked like a continuous, oval-shaped lean-to because of the way in which the roofs of the discrete houses were attached. Each house, however, is owned by the family that built it. Shararaiwä, Kąobawä's youngest brother, helped build Kąobawä's house and shares it with him. He also shares Koamashima, Kąobawä's younger wife. Kąobawä's older wife, Bahimi, hangs her hammock adjacent to Kąobawä's most of the time, but when there are visitors and the village is crowded, she ties her hammock under his in order to be able to tend the fire during the night. Ariwari still sleeps with his mother, but will get his own hammock soon: He is nearly four years old. His parents are afraid he will fall into the fire at night and get burned, since he is still a little too young to sleep alone.[21]

Daily activities begin early in a Yąnomamö village. One can hear people chatting lazily and children crying long before it is light enough to see. Most people are waked by the cold and build up the fire just before daybreak. They usually go back to sleep, but many of them visit and talk about their plans for the day.

The entrances are all covered with dry brush so that any movement of people through them is heard all over the village. There is always a procession of people leaving the village at dawn to relieve themselves in the nearby garden, and the noise they make going in and out of the village usually awakens the others.

The village is very smoky at this time of day, since the newly stoked campfires smoulder before they leap into flames. The air is usually very still and chilly, and the ground is damp from the dew. The smoke is pleasant and seems to drive away the coolness.

Clandestine sexual liasons usually take place at this time of day, having been arranged on the previous evening. The lovers leave the village on the pretext of going to the bathroom and meet at some predetermined location. They return to the village by opposite routes.

This is also the time of day when raiders strike, so people must be cautious when they leave the village at dawn. If there is some reason to suspect raiders, they do not leave the confines of the upright log palisade that surrounds the village. They wait instead until full light and leave the village in armed groups.

By the time it is light enough to see, everybody has started preparing breakfast. This consists largely of roasted green plantains, easily prepared and steaming hot. If the family has any meat, it is taken down and shared, the children getting the best portions. Leftover meat is hung over the fire by a vine to keep the vermin off it and to preserve it.

If any of the men have made plans to hunt that day, they leave the village before it is light. Wild turkeys can be easily taken at this time of day because they roost in conspicuous places. During the dry season the *hashimo* (a kind of grouse) sing before dark and can be readily located. If any were heard the night before, the men leave at dawn to stalk them.

Tobacco chewing starts as soon as people begin stirring. Those who have fresh

[21] A child fell into a fire and burned to death in 1966—the mother had placed her hammock too close to the fire in order to keep warm, and the baby slipped from her arms while she slept. Bahimi's mother also sleeps in Kąobawä's house, but he does not have to avoid her because she is an old woman.

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drugs take effect. This usually lasts for an hour or so, after which the men bathe to wash the vomit or nasal mucus off their bodies. Kąobawä does not participate in the drug-taking, as he finds it unpleasant. Most of the men, however, do take drugs and enjoy doing it, despite the associated unpleasantries of vomiting and the pain that follows the blast of air as the powder is blown deeply into the nasal passages.

Whatever the men do for the afternoon, however, the women invariably search for firewood and haul immense, heavy loads of it to their houses just before dark.

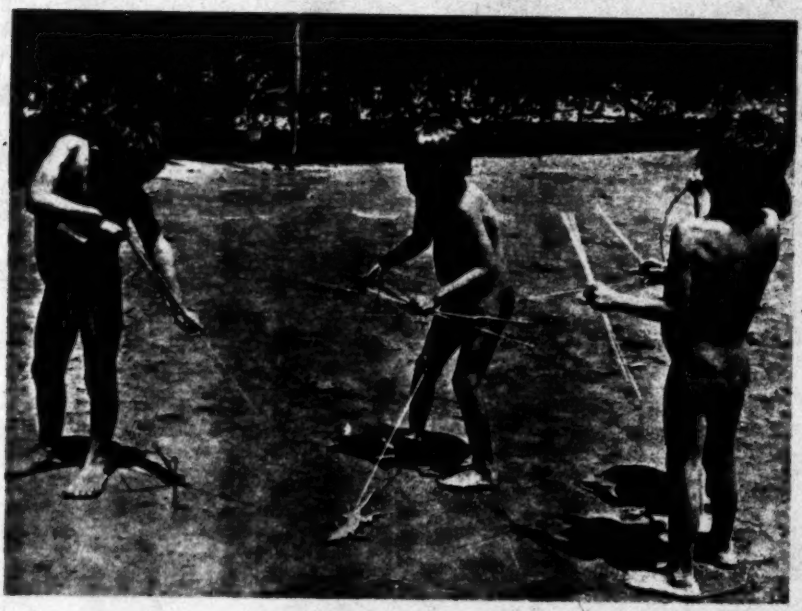

Fig. 3–8. Boys shooting tiny arrows into a lizard they have captured. The lizard is tied to a string and allowed to run around the village while the boys gleefully chase it. Here they have wounded it and are about to fill it full of arrows.

The biggest meal of the day is prepared in the evening. The staple is plantains, but frequently other kinds of food are available after the day's activities. Meat is always the most desirable food and is always considered to be in short supply. It is a happy occasion when one of the hunters bags a tapir, for everyone gets a large share of it.

It is good to share meat with others. This attitude is expressed in the sentiment that a hunter should give away most of the game he kills. One of the obligations men take very seriously is providing adequate quantities of meat for their wives and children. They genuinely abhor hearing their children cry for meat; this calls into question their abilities as hunters and marksmen, both of which are associated with prestige. Rerebawä, for example, collected a large supply of game on one trip we took together. He gave it all to his wife and children and to his wife's parents. At the evening meal he refused to

At the evening meal he refused to take a portion of the meat so that the others could have more. Later in the evening, he appeared at my hut begging for a can of sardines to satisfy his hunger for meat. He preferred to go hungry rather than risk the onus of being accused of poor marksmanship or stinginess.

Both sexes participate in the cooking, although the women do the greater share of it. Food preparation is not elaborate and rarely requires much labor, time, or paraphernalia. Spices are never used, although the salty ashes of a particular kind of tree are sometimes mixed with water to form a condiment of sorts. The food is dunked into the salty liquid and eaten.

Everyone eats in his hammock using his fingers for utensils. Some meals cannot be eaten from a reclining position, so the members of the family squat in a circle around the common dish. For example, large quantities of tiny fish are cooked by wrapping them in leaves and cooking them in the hot coals. When the fish are done, the package is spread open, and everyone shares its contents.

Animals are never skinned before cooking. They are merely put over the fire after their entrails have been removed, and roasted, head, fur, claws, and all. Most of the fur is singed off in the process of cooking. The animal is dismembered by hand. The head, particularly the head of a monkey, is highly prized because the brain is considered a delicacy. The most common meat is monkey, of which there are several varieties, so that this delicacy is enjoyed rather frequently by the Yąnomamö.

By the time supper is over it is nearly dark. The fires are prepared for the evening; if someone has allowed his own fire to go out during the day, he simply borrows two glowing sticks from a neighbor and rekindles his own hearth. The entrances to the village are sealed off with dry brush so that prowlers can not enter without raising an alarm. Before retiring to their hammocks, the Yąnomamö first sit on them and wipe the bottoms of their bare feet together. This rubs off most of the debris that has accumulated on them during the course of the day. Everyone sleeps naked and as close to the fire as possible. Despite the inevitable last-minute visiting, things are usually quiet in the village by the time it is dark.

Things are not always quiet after dark. If anyone in the village is sick, a shaman will chant to the malevolent spirits most of the night to exorcise them. Or, should anyone be mourning a dead kinsman, he or she will sob and wail long after the others have fallen asleep. Occasionally, a fight will break out between a husband and wife, and soon everybody in the village will be screaming, expressing opinions on the dispute. The shouting may continue sporadically for hours, dying down only to break out anew as someone gets a fresh insight into the problem. Once in a while someone gives a long, loud speech voicing his opinion on the world in general. Those who are interested may add their own comments, but the audience usually grumbles about the noise and falls asleep.

Status Differences and Activities

Daily activities, except those concerning gardening and visiting, do not vary much from season to season. Much of the variation that does occur is a function of one's age or sex, as was shown above.

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Other status differences do exist and account for some variation in the activities of particular individuals. Rerebawä, for example, is an outsider to Kąobawä's group and has no intention of joining the village as a permanent resident. Consequently, he does not participate in the gardening activities and has considerably more spare time than other married men. He spends this time hunting for his wife and her parents, one of his obligations as a son-in-law. He is quite dependent on them for the bulk of his diet because they provide him with all his plantains. This is perhaps why he takes his hunting obligations so seriously and gives his game away so unflinchingly. He is quick to make reference to his hunting skills and generosity, perhaps to draw attention away from the fact that he does not cultivate food for his wife and children. He has been able to avoid making a garden because of his status as an outsider; he plans to return to his own village as soon as his bride service is over. But his in-laws want him to stay permanently so that he will be able to provide them with meat and garden produce when they are old. They have no sons to do this for them and have even promised Rerebawä their second daughter on the condition that he remain permanently in the village. They prevent Rerebawä from taking his wife and children home by keeping at least one of the children with them when Rerebawä goes to visit his own family. They know that his wife could not bear to be separated permanently from her child, and Rerebawä invariably brings her back home so that she can be with the child.

By Yąnomamö standards he has done enough bride service and deserves to be given his wife. Also, by their standards he has lived in the village so long that he should be obliged to make his own garden. But he can legitimately refuse to do this because he has discharged his obligations well beyond what was expected of him.

Kąobawä, on the other hand, has the special status of being his group's headman. Apart from this, he is also some fifteen years senior to Rerebawä and has a higher sense of obligation and responsibility to his family. Rerebawä, in addition to refusing to make a garden, thinks nothing of taking a week-long trip to visit friends, leaving his wife and children with her parents. His attitude toward the children, compared to Kąobawä's, is rather indifferent. Kąobawä had planned to accompany me to Caracas to see how foreigners live until Ariwari began crying and appealed to his father's paternal sensitivities. Kąobawä stepped out of the canoe, took off the clothing I had loaned him, and picked up Ariwari; "I can't go with you," he explained, "Ariwari will miss me and be sad."

Kąobawä thinks for the others in the village, many of whom are not able to perceive some of the less obvious implications of situations. In political matters he is the most astute man in group, but he so diplomatically exercises his influence that the others are not offended. Should someone be planning to do something that is potentially dangerous, he simply points out the danger and adds parenthetically, "Go ahead and do it if you want to, but don't expect sympathy from me if you get hurt." Sharaiwä, his youngest brother, planned to take a trip to a distant village with me. I knew that the two villages were not on particularly good terms with each other, but they were not actively at war. Kąobawä arrived at my canoe just as we were about to depart and asked me not to take Sharaiwä along, explaining that the Iyawei-teri might possibly molest him and precipitate hostilities between the two groups. Sharaiwä was willing to take a chance that my presence would be sufficient to deter any potential trouble, but Kąobawä would not risk it.

On another occasion a group of men from Patanowä-teri arrived to explore with

neutral. The treacherous feast for their Shamatari enemies proved to be unsuccessful: The intended victims had accepted the invitation, but were informed of the plot just before they arrived. One of the Reyaboböwei-teri who had close kinsmen among them had misgivings about the matter and warned them.

Late in the afternoon it was learned that the Mahekodo-teri were, in fact, in the vicinity of the village, allegedly on a "camping trip." Kąobawä, of course, suspected their story, but to demonstrate his friendship he invited them to be his guests at a feast. As he and his men had been away for nearly two weeks, there was an abundance of food in their gardens and they could easily afford to entertain the Mahekodo-teri and their traveling companions, the Boreta-teri. Together, the guests numbered about 100—after they fetched their women and children.

This sets the stage for the feast in the kind of context that makes it more intelligible: The specific historical relationships between the participants and the nature of their mutual mistrust. Now I will give the details of the events that followed.

The Feast

Perhaps because he suspected the Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri of intimidation, Kąobawä also invited the Karohi-teri to attend the feast. They are a small but dependable ally and had themselves separated from the Mahekodo-teri many years ago. This established a balance of power at the projected feast should any trouble arise, for the combination of both Boreta-teri and Mahekodo-teri was of sufficient strength to worry any host. With the aid of the Karohi-teri, Kąobawä's group was more of a match for the visitors.

The feast started out on a sour note. It is the custom of the Yąnomamö visitors to arrive only after an invitation from their hosts, sent by messenger on the day of the feast. The Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri, however, arrogantly arrived nearly a week before Kąobawä's group was prepared to receive them and set up a large, temporary camp a short distance from the village. They were guests and could legitimately demand to be fed. Because of this, Kąobawä and his covillagers were under obligation to feed them, some hundred or so people, and took them to the gardens to supply them with enough plantains to last a week. Kąobawä was a little disturbed that they would be so impolite as to arrive uninvited, but took the situation quite philosophically. After all, they had fed his group for the better part of a year.

He and several other men cut a large quantity of plantains, which were hung in his house and allowed to ripen for a week, to be boiled into *date*, a thick, sweet soup, on the day of the feast. That afternoon Kąobawä and a few of the older men commissioned a hunting party comprised of young men, several of whom were Kąobawä's brothers, whose responsibility would be to obtain a large quantity of fresh meat to give to the visitors on the day after the feast. Most of them were reluctant to go, as their feet were still sore from the trip to the Shamatari village. A few of them claimed to be sick and managed to escape recruitment into the hunting party in this way. This hunt, with the hanging of the plantains in the headman's house, initiated the feast. The excitement that usually attends a feast began at this time.

That evening the young men danced and sang in the village, an institution called *amoamo*, thereby insuring themselves with luck on the hunt. (The Yąnomamö also

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amoamo on other occasions, but invariably do so on the day the plantains are hung in the village in anticipation of a feast.) Every evening the men are away on their *beniomou*, the week-long hunt, the young women and girls sing and dance in the village to insure them success.

The hunters left at dawn the following morning, carrying a large supply of roasted and green plantains with them to eat while they hunted. They had picked a site some 25 miles up the Mavaca River for their hunt, as game was known to abound there. Their task was to obtain monkeys, armadillos, wild turkeys, wild pig, tapir or sloth, the only meat deemed worthy to give to guests. They would not be permitted to eat any of this game, but could consume any other game they captured, such as deer, small birds, a small species of wild turkey, or insects and fish they happened to come upon. The feast meat, however, was earmarked for the guests and could not be eaten by the hunters. On this particular hunting trip the men miscalculated the amount of food they would need to sustain them during the hunt, and one of them returned after four days to fetch more plantains. He also gave Kąobawä a report on the hunt's success, creating a small sensation in the village: They had already killed a large number of *basbo*, a particularly large and very desirable monkey. They had also come upon a quantity of turtle eggs at a sand bar and were eating as many as they could. When they returned later, they cached the remaining eggs in my house, so as not to have to share them with the visitors.

Meanwhile, the visitors were making gluttons of themselves, and the hosts started to grumble about the large number of plantains they had already eaten. The week's supply they originally provided had been consumed in half that time, and the guests had been given permission a second time to harvest more from their hosts' gardens. This was no way for guests to behave, and it soon became apparent that they were intimidating Kąobawä's group. Still, he and his followers continued to supply them with all the food they needed, keeping their complaints to themselves. They did not want it to be known that they were worried about running short of food. Instead, they planned to conduct the feast on a scale that would be difficult to reciprocate.

The hunters returned and presented their catch to Kąobawä. It was brought to his house and placed on the ground, wrapped up in leaves. Kąobawä ignored it for a while and then slowly began to unpack it (see Fig. 4–1) while everybody watched—especially the hunters, who were quite proud of the quantity of meat they had obtained: seventeen *basbo* monkeys, seven wild turkeys, and three large armadillos. Hunting trips are not usually this successful, but the hunters had fortunately stumbled into a large band of *basbo* and had nearly wiped it out.

Kąobawä and his group were anxious to conduct the feast for their visitors and present them with the food, because by so doing the visitors would be obliged to leave for home, thereby ending the drain on the gardens.[2]

The feast was scheduled for the day following the return of the hunters, even though the Karohi-teri had not yet arrived. Kąobawä and his group were so anxious to rid themselves of their ravenous guests by this time that they decided to hold a separate feast for the Karohi-teri on the day following the departure of the Mahekodo-teri. This would involve a considerable amount of extra work, but they were more than willing to

[2] I have seen several instances of Yąnomamö groups getting rid of visitors who have joined them semipermanently by holding a feast in their honor; when the ceremonial food is presented, the visitors are obliged to leave.